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Operational activities for development: triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Pakistan:* draft resolution

Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989, 47/199 of 22 December 1992, 50/120 of 20 December 1995, 52/203 of 18 December 1997, 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, 53/192 of 15 December 1998, 56/201 of 21 December 2001 and 59/250 of 22 December 2004, Economic and Social Council resolutions 2005/7 of 20 July 2005 and 2006/14 of 26 July 2006 and other relevant resolutions,

Reaffirming the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities, through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the United Nations system,

Reaffirming also the need to ensure, in a coherent and timely manner, the full implementation of all the elements of its resolutions 44/211, 47/199, 50/120, 53/192, 56/201 and 59/250, and the parts of its resolution 52/12 B, relevant to operational activities for development, which should be considered as an integral part of the present resolution,

Recalling the role of the Economic and Social Council in providing coordination and guidance to the United Nations system to ensure that those policy orientations are implemented on a system-wide basis in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, 50/227 of 24 May 1996, 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 and 61/16 of 20 November 2006,

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

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Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000,[1] the 2005 World Summit Outcome[2] and its resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006 on follow-up to the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit, including the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals,

Recalling further the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, including the development goals and objectives contained therein, and recognizing the vital role played by these conferences and summits in shaping a broad development vision and in identifying commonly agreed objectives, which have contributed to improving human life in different parts of the world,

Recognizing that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, offer a framework for planning, reviewing and assessing the activities of the United Nations for development,

Recognizing also that new technologies, including information and communications technology, present an opportunity to accelerate development, especially in developing countries, and noting with concern that access to those technologies remains uneven and that a digital divide still prevails,

Reiterating the importance of the development of national capacities to eradicate poverty and pursue sustained economic growth and sustainable development as a central goal of the development cooperation of the United Nations system,

Recognizing the urgent and specific needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States,

Recognizing also the special needs of Africa,

Noting the advances that the United Nations development system is making in the area of coordination, including in the implementation of resolution 59/250,

I. Introduction

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;[3]

2. *Reaffirms* that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of recipient countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities are carried out for the benefit of recipient countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development;

3. *Also reaffirms* that the operational activities for development of the United Nations development system are founded upon and underpinned by the fundamental principles of respect for national sovereignty, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

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[1] See resolution 55/2.

[2] See resolution 60/1.

[3] A/62/73-E/2007/52 and A/62/253.

4. *Underscores* the fact that there is no "one size fits all" approach to development and that the provision of development assistance by the United Nations development system should respond to the diverse needs of developing countries and be in accordance with their national development plans and strategies;

5. *Recognizes* that the strength of the United Nations operational system lies in its legitimacy, at the country level, as a neutral, objective and trusted partner for both recipient countries and donor countries;

6. *Emphasizes* that recipient Governments have the primary responsibility for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations, in order to effectively integrate such assistance into their development process;

7. *Stresses* that the purpose of the comprehensive policy review of the operational activities for development of the United Nations development system is to better deliver more effective and efficient support to developing countries and to strengthen and enhance support for the efforts of developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, on the basis of their respective national development strategies;

8. *Requests* the United Nations development system to continue its efforts to respond to national development plans, policies and priorities, which constitute the only viable frame of reference for programming their operational activities at the country level, and to pursue full integration of operational activities for development at the country level with national planning and programming, under the leadership of national Governments, at all stages of the process;

9. *Recognizes* that strengthening the role and capacity of the United Nations development system to assist countries in achieving their development goals requires continuing improvement in its effectiveness, efficiency and impact, along with a significant increase in resources and an expansion of its resource base on a continuous, more predictable and assured basis;

10. *Also recognizes* that the field work performed by the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies in different areas of development has resulted in the accumulation of a unique wealth of experience and has provided them with an awareness of and the capacity to address the real development needs of developing countries;

11. *Stresses*, therefore, that improvement of coordination and coherence among the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, at the country level, must be undertaken in a manner that does not undermine their respective intergovernmentally agreed mandates and preserves the separate identity and unique characteristic of each United Nations fund, programme and specialized agency;

12. *Urges* all Member States to pursue full implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and recognizes the positive contribution that these goals can make in providing direction to the operational activities for development of the United Nations system in accordance with national development efforts and priorities;

II. Funding for operational activities of the United Nations development system

13. *Expresses concern* at the decline in contributions to the United Nations development system for operational activities in 2006 in both nominal and real terms;

14. *Stresses* that core resources, because of their untied nature, continue to be the bedrock of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and in this regard notes with concern that the share of core contributions to United Nations funds and programmes has declined in recent years and that the imbalance between core and non-core resources has been growing, negatively impacting the ability of the United Nations development system to respond to the national priorities of recipient countries;

15. *Also stresses* that non-core resources are not a substitute for core resources and that unearmarked contributions are vital for the coherence and harmonization of operational activities for development;

16. *Urges* donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to substantially increase their contributions to the core/regular budgets of the United Nations development system, in particular its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and to contribute on a multi-year basis, in a sustained and predictable manner, without any conditionalities;

17. *Requests* the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to avoid using regular resources to cover costs related to the mobilization and management of extrabudgetary funds;

18. *Stresses* that the mobilization and management of extrabudgetary resources should not impact the quality of the execution of the programme of work of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system;

19. *Expresses concern* that, based on assessed contributions, the regular budgets of the specialized agencies have been locked at an historically low level because of the application of zero nominal growth policies;

20. *Urges* developed countries to rescind zero-growth policies with regard to assessed contributions to regular budgets of specialized agencies, in order to enable the United Nations development system to respond in a more comprehensive and effective manner to the demands of the United Nations development agenda;

21. *Notes with great concern* the decline in official development assistance in 2006 and the projection of its continued decline, and urges developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts to reach the targets of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of their gross national income to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001;[4]

22. *Recognizes* the urgent and specific needs of low-income countries, in particular the least developed countries, and stresses the need to continue to assist

[4] See A/CONF.191/13, chaps. I and II.

those countries through the existing institutions and funding mechanisms of the United Nations development system;

23. *Also recognizes* that middle-income developing countries still face significant challenges in the area of poverty eradication and that efforts to address those challenges should be supported in order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, and stresses that special attention should be given to the effective development of comprehensive cooperation policies for middle-income developing countries in the operational activities for development of the United Nations development system;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to:

(a) Continue to broaden and improve coverage, timelines, quality and comparability of system-wide financial data for the financial reporting of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

(b) Build a comprehensive and sustainable financial data and reporting system for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

25. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to undertake, in full consultation with Member States, measures to ensure:

(a) That there is an expanding and adequate base of development assistance from the United Nations development system;

(b) The continuation of the upward trend in nominal contributions to operational activities for development and that obstacles to the achievement of that goal are identified and appropriate recommendations made in this regard;

(c) That the imbalance between core and non-core contributions is addressed on a continuous basis and that obstacles to the achievement of that goal are identified and appropriate recommendations made in this regard;

26. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report, in pursuance to paragraph 25 above, to the sixty-third session of the General Assembly;

III. Contribution of United Nations operational activities to national capacity development and development effectiveness

A. Capacity-building and development

27. *Stresses* that capacity development and national ownership of national development strategies are essential for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and calls upon United Nations organizations to provide further support to the efforts of developing countries to establish and/or maintain effective national institutions and to support the implementation and, as necessary, the devising of national strategies for capacity-building;

28. *Requests* the United Nations development system, in consultation with Member States, to create and report on a specific, measurable, achievable and time-bound results framework to measure capacity-building initiatives and activities of the United Nations development system in developing countries;

29. *Also requests* the United Nations development system to support the development of specific frameworks aimed at enabling developing countries, upon

their request, to design, monitor and evaluate results in the development of their capacities to achieve national development goals and strategies;

30. *Calls for* the United Nations development system to ensure the sustainability of capacity development activities supported by the United Nations development system, including by further mainstreaming national execution and using national systems and national expertise and resources as the preferred implementation modality for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

31. *Stresses* that developing countries, in order to meet the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration,[1] should have access to new and emerging technologies, including information and communications technology, which requires technology transfer, technical cooperation and the building and nurturing of scientific and technological capacity to participate in the development and adaptation of these technologies to local conditions, and in this regard urges Member States and the United Nations system to ensure the promotion and transfer of new and emerging technologies to developing countries;

32. *Requests* the United Nations development system to strengthen its role in facilitating access of developing countries to new and emerging technologies, including information and communications technology, and their participation in the development and/or adaptation of such technologies;

B. South-South cooperation and development of national capacities

33. *Reaffirms* the increased importance of South-South cooperation, and in this regard encourages the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system involved to mainstream support to South-South and triangular cooperation in their regular activities and to help recipient countries, at their request and with their ownership and leadership, to develop capacities in order to maximize the benefits and impact of South-South and triangular cooperation in order to achieve their national goals, with special emphasis on internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

34. *Calls upon* donors and Member States in a position to do so to strengthen their support for South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, especially by mobilizing financial resources on a sustainable basis;

35. *Urges* all Member States and the United Nations development system to actively participate in the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation;

36. *Invites* the United Nations development system to intensify its information-sharing and reporting on support provided by all funds, programmes and specialized agencies to South-South, including, triangular cooperation;

37. *Stresses* that further efforts are required to better understand the approaches and the potential of South-South cooperation to enhance development effectiveness, including through national capacity development, and in this context calls upon all the organizations of the United Nations development system to further enhance their support for national capacity development in the context of South-South cooperation;

38. *Also stresses* the importance of strengthening the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme, and calls on the United Nations development system to provide the Special Unit with necessary support to enable it to fulfil its mandate;

39. *Requests* the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation to continue facilitating the wide diffusion of and access to information relating to experiences, best practices and potential partners in South-South cooperation on the Web of Information for Development, its electronic databank;

40. *Invites* Member States and the United Nations development system to celebrate the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation in an appropriate manner;

C. Gender

41. *Reiterates its call upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system, within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality and empowerment of women in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with the national development strategies;

42. *Requests* the United Nations development system to further enhance the effectiveness of gender specialist resources, gender focal points and gender theme groups, inter alia, by establishing clear mandates, ensuring adequate training, access to information and to adequate and stable resources and by increasing the support and participation of senior staff;

43. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations development system to continue efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system at the central, regional and country levels for positions that affect operational activities for development, including resident coordinator appointments and other high-level posts, with due regard to representation of women from developing countries and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographic representation;

D. Transition from relief to development

44. *Takes note* of the ongoing work within the United Nations on the complex issue of transition from relief to development;

45. *Recognizes* that the United Nations development system can play an effective role in situations of transition from relief to development, and requests the United Nations development system to undertake such activities upon the request of the affected State, with strong national ownership and leadership;

46. *Requests* the United Nations development system, in responding to countries affected by natural disasters or conflict situations, to be mindful of the need to apply different approaches in order to effectively respond and provide assistance in these different situations, upon the request of the affected State and in accordance with national strategies and policies;

47. *Stresses* the need for transitional activities to be undertaken under national ownership, through the development of national capacities at all levels, to manage the transition process;

48. *Requests* the United Nations development system to support, at the request of national Governments of countries in transition from relief to development, national capacity-building efforts and to submit a report on their initiatives and activities in annual reporting to their respective governing bodies;

49. *Requests* the United Nations organizations to take measures that further strengthen the coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of operational activities of the United Nations development system in countries in transition from relief to development;

50. *Recognizes* that the exchange of expertise and experiences among countries of the South enables countries in situations of transition from relief to development to benefit from the experiences of other developing countries, and encourages the further development of South-South cooperation modalities, including triangular cooperation modalities, in this regard;

51. *Invites* the United Nations development system, taking into account, in its assistance to countries emerging from conflict that are on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, the advisory role that the Commission can play in relation to peacebuilding and recovery strategies, with a view to supporting their long-term economic and social recovery and development with full respect for national ownership and leadership in identifying priorities and development strategies;

52. *Urges* the donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to consider more coordinated and flexible approaches to funding operational activities for development in situations of transition from relief to development, making use of multiple resource mobilization instruments, and stresses that contributions to humanitarian assistance should not be provided at the expense of development assistance and that sufficient resources for humanitarian assistance should be made available by the international community;

53. *Urges* United Nations agencies and the donor community, in coordination with the national authorities, to begin planning the transition to development and taking measures supportive of that transition, such as institutional and capacity-building measures, from the beginning of the relief phase;

54. *Recognizes* the inadequacy and lack of predictability of funding of operational activities in countries in transition from relief to development, and urges developed countries to provide timely, long-term, predictable and sustained financial contributions for the operational activities of the United Nations system in countries in transition from relief to development;

IV. Improved functioning of the United Nations development system

A. Overall coherence, relevance and effectiveness of the United Nations development system

55. *Underscores* that the ownership, leadership and full participation of national authorities in the preparation and development of all planning and programming documents of the United Nations development system and the United

Nations Development Assistance Framework are key to guaranteeing that they respond to the national development plans and strategies aimed at the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, of the countries concerned;

56. *Also underscores* the importance of aligning the strategic planning cycles of the United Nations funds and programmes to ensure that they are consistent with the triennial comprehensive policy review, which establishes the intergovernmentally agreed parameters of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

57. *Emphasizes* that the planning and programming frameworks of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, need to be fully aligned with national development planning cycles, whenever possible, and that they should make use of and strengthen national capacities and mechanisms, including national assessment mechanisms that can replace the common country assessments, and contribute to the achievement of national development goals, with particular emphasis on the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, upon the request of recipient countries and under their ownership and leadership;

58. *Invites* the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions to intensify cooperation, collaboration and coordination, in full accordance with Articles 57 and 63 of the Charter of the United Nations and the priorities of recipient Governments;

59. *Reaffirms* that the resident coordinator system, working within the framework of national ownership and government leadership of national development processes, should play a role in the effective and efficient functioning of the United Nations development system at the country level, and underscores that in its functioning the system should work to achieve improvements in the efficiency of the United Nations country teams through alignment of their programmes and activities with the national development strategies and plans of developing countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty and to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development;

60. *Underscores* the fact that the resident coordinator system is owned by the United Nations development system as a whole and that its functioning should be participatory, collegial and accountable;

61. *Encourages* efforts by the United Nations development system to improve the selection and training process of resident coordinators;

62. *Notes* that coordination activities, while beneficial, represent transaction costs that are borne by both recipient countries and the organizations of the United Nations system, and emphasizes the need for their continuous evaluation and for an analysis and assessment of costs compared with the total programme expenditures for operational activities for development in order to ensure maximum efficiency and feasibility;

63. *Requests* the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme in the exercise of responsibilities for the management of the resident

coordinator system, which continues to be firmly anchored in the Development Programme, to ensure:

(a) Establishment of appropriate mechanisms to ensure that the cost of the resident coordinator system does not reduce resources that are destined for development programmes in recipient countries;

(b) Adequate levels of support needed for the effective functioning of the resident coordinator system;

(c) Monitoring and evaluation of the cost of the resident coordinator system as compared to total programme expenditures for operational activities for development and to other coordination mechanisms, as well as reporting in this regard on an annual basis;

64. *Encourages* the use of advanced information and communications technology that will facilitate the contribution of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other planning frameworks and mechanisms, as well as overall information-sharing, resulting in more effective delivery of development cooperation of the United Nations system;

B. Regional dimensions

65. *Recognizes* that interregional, regional and subregional cooperation can also contribute to addressing the several development challenges related to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

66. *Encourages* the United Nations development system to strengthen collaboration with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations and regional banks, as appropriate and consistent with their respective mandates, to address challenges related to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

67. *Requests* the United Nations regional commissions to further develop their analytical capacities to support country-level development initiatives at the request of the recipient countries and to promote measures for more intensive inter-agency collaboration at the regional and subregional levels;

68. *Requests* the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system at the regional level and the regional commissions to further strengthen cooperation and coordination among each other at the regional level and with their respective headquarters, in close consultation with Governments of the countries concerned, and, where appropriate, to include the funds, programmes and specialized agencies that are represented at the regional level;

C. Transaction costs and efficiency

69. *Notes with concern* that the growth of non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding and of the number of associated projects increases transaction costs for all organizations and is a definite factor that might hinder the effort to maximize efficiency, and underscores the importance of increasing core resources for improving the efficiency of the United Nations development system;

70. *Encourages* United Nations funds and programmes to harmonize and simplify their rules and procedures, bearing in mind the special circumstances of recipient countries in order to enhance the accountability and transparency of the United Nations funds and programmes for operational activities for development;

71. *Requests* the United Nations development system to further standardize and harmonize the concepts and practices related to transaction cost and cost recovery, while maintaining the principle of full cost recovery in the administration of non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary contributions;

72. *Emphasizes* the need to lower transaction costs related to operational activities for development, in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of activities of the United Nations development system, and calls for savings on transaction costs to be channelled into programme funding for operational activities for development in developing countries;

73. *Encourages* the United Nations development system to make increased use of national systems for support services, including for procurement, security, information technology, telecommunications, travel and banking, as well as for planning, reporting and evaluation, with the aim of strengthening national capacities and reducing transaction costs;

74. *Requests* the Executive Boards of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to review the issue of cost recovery to ensure that core resources do not subsidize the projects undertaken through non-core/supplementary/extrabudgetary funding;

75. *Requests* that the trust funds and other funding mechanisms established by developing countries to promote South-South cooperation be exempted from cost recovery, with a view to ensuring their sustainability;

D. Country-level capacity of the United Nations development system

76. *Reiterates* the need for the range and level of skills and expertise assembled by the United Nations system at the country level to be commensurate with that needed to deliver on the priorities specified in each country's United Nations Development Assistance Framework or country programme documents, in line with the national development strategies and plans, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, and to correspond to the technical backstopping and capacity-building needs and requirements of developing countries;

77. *Encourages* the organizations of the United Nations development system to take all necessary measures in their human resources policies to ensure that United Nations staff involved in operational activities at the country level have the skills and expertise required for effective policy advisory and other capacity development work, in line with national development priorities and plans, including the internationally agreed development goals and the Millennium Development Goals;

78. *Also encourages* the organizations of the United Nations development system to continue and intensify efforts related to inter-agency staff mobility, re-profiling and redeployment of staff, as well as training and skills-upgrading, notably at the United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy;

79. *Underscores* the importance of the use of national professional staff and national consultants;

80. *Encourages* the United Nations development system to further promote, develop and support knowledge management systems, so that recipient countries can avail themselves of knowledge and expertise that is not readily accessible at the country level, including resources readily available at the regional level and from non-resident agencies;

E. Evaluation of operational activities for development

81. *Emphasizes* that developing countries should have greater ownership and leadership in the evaluation of all forms of assistance, including that provided by the United Nations development system, and requests the United Nations development system to pursue and intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in recipient countries;

82. *Reaffirms* that the effectiveness of operational activities should be assessed by their impact on the poverty eradication efforts, economic growth and sustainable development of recipient countries;

83. *Encourages* Governments of developing countries, in accordance with their national policy objectives, in close cooperation with the United Nations development system, to initiate and conduct joint and country-led evaluations that comprehensively assess the impact and effectiveness of the contribution of the United Nations development system to national and, as appropriate, regional development plans and strategies, including efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

84. *Requests* the United Nations development system to further develop guidance and oversight mechanisms for the funding, planning and implementation of monitoring and evaluation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, with a view to assessing their contribution to national development and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

85. *Encourages* all United Nations organizations involved in operational activities for development that have not already done so to adopt monitoring and evaluation policies that are in line with system-wide norms and standards and to make the necessary financial and institutional arrangements for the creation and/or strengthening of an independent, credible and useful evaluation function within each organization;

V. Follow-up

86. *Reaffirms* that the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system should take appropriate actions for the full implementation of the present resolution, in line with paragraphs 91 and 92 of resolution 56/201;

87. *Requests* the Secretary-General, after consultation with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2008, on an

appropriate management process, containing clear guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time frames for the full implementation of the present resolution;

88. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, on the basis of information provided by funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations development system, to submit to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive sessions of 2009 and 2010, detailed reports on results achieved and measures and processes implemented in follow-up to the present resolution on the triennial comprehensive policy review in order to evaluate the implementation of the resolution, with a view to ensuring its full implementation;

89. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the present resolution in the context of the triennial comprehensive policy review, inter alia, by making use of relevant documentation, and to make appropriate recommendations.